the settlement of which it forms part represents the hamlet on the council of the settlement and receives in consequence a robe of honour from the king or from the chief of the settlement. If his hamlet is only a subsidiary seat of a lineage in the settlement he is regarded merely as its senior member.

The settlement to which I have just referred is called *pwdh*, a word which has a number of meanings but generally designates a group of hamlets, occupied by different lineages, which, though there may be much competition between them, unite for defence, for the ritual of age-sets (an institution otherwise of little political importance), and in intersettlement and national affairs, and have a common chief. There are about a hundred of these settlements in Shillukland, each having a population of from less than 100 to more than 600 adult males. They are structurally distinct groups of a political kind though the distance that divides a settlement from adjacent settlements may be no greater than that which separates a hamlet from its nearest neighbours in the same settlement.

In every settlement there is a dominant lineage, the *dyil*, the owners of the soil, with whom the various stranger and immigrant accretions (*wedh*) identify themselves politically and with whom they

are to-day numerous and widely diffused branches of the royal clan whose members are ineligible for royal office and lack authority, unless they are also chiefs of settlements, although they are treated with deference by commoners in virtue of their descent. Indeed, the royal clan is easily the largest single clan in the whole country, being said to comprise perhaps a fifteenth of the nation. In some areas its members are more numerous than commoners and have supplanted commoner lineages in the chieftainship of settlements. This process, which continues to-day, has been going on for a long time, for it is said that Abudok, the eighth ruler (and only queen) of the Shilluk, prophesied that one day the royal clan would eat up the rest of the Shilluk.[1] It results from the custom of sending pregnant wives of a king from the royal capital to bear their children in other, generally their natal, settlements. Their daughters are not allowed to marry and therefore do not start lines of descent which would count as sisters' sons to the royal house. Their sons are brought up by settlement chiefs, often their mothers' brothers, and not in the capital. When a prince (*nyireth*) marries he builds a separate hamlet near that of the settlement chief

[1] Westermann, *op. cit.* p. 149.

3:Westermann E-5 (1918) 1912 F323 Shilluk F323

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lebensraum (management). The natives also hunt the hare, porcupine, ground-squirrel, rat, and hedgehog. The rivers and khors, and chiefly their estuaries, are populated by crocodiles, hippos, and numerous fish, some of which weigh up to lbs. 200. The birds are mainly riverside: cranes, storks, herons, egrets, fish-eagles, marabous, pelicans, ibises, ducks, geese; the guinea-fowl is very common; comfortless creatures of desert-birds (Pterocletes famelicosus) are a great nuisance to the farmer; besides these quails, pigeons, turtle-doves, larks, crows, swallows, owls, and starlings are frequent. Of snakes the largest are pythons; of poisonous species the puff-adder and some others occur; harmless snakes are numerous.

POPULATION

161 162 163 361

The population amounts to about 600 000 souls,[1] who live in a little more than 1200 villages, and 10 000 "domiciles", each of which consists of three to five huts. Accordingly the average number of people living in a village is 50, and one domicile is inhabited by about six persons. The largest village is Atwalol in a district of the same name north of Kodok; it contains (1913) of 120 domiciles. The villages generally lie in the belt between the swamp of the Nile-bank and the forest. There are, however, eight groups of villages 10—20 miles inland, away from the river. The country is, for its size, and considering the fact that only in the higher parts settlements are possible, thickly populated. "Right away from Kaka to Lake No is a continuous string of villages lying about a mile from the river. There are only two points in the whole of this distance, at which the interval between villages exceeds two miles, and these are the points where grazing is bad, between Akurwar and Nun, and between Nialwag and Nyagwado." A. E. S., p. 193.

161 162 361 311

According to Schweinfurth, the population was much larger formerly. In 1871, when the Egyptians had conquered the country, a census was taken; the villages on the left bank of the Nile were almost exactly 3000. The inhabitants of this part numbered one million, each village consisting of 45—200 huts, a hut comprising four persons. No part of Africa, not even of the world, is so densely populated. "The whole western Nile bank, as far as the boundaries of the country reach, is like one single village, whose parts are separated by a distance of only 500 to 1000 steps. The hut-clusters are built in an astonishing regularity, and are so crowded together that from a distance they look like a cluster of mushrooms."

164 119

The statement of a population of more than one million is probably too high; the Shilluks have doubtlessly suffered cruelly from wars and raids, but in spite of this a decrease from one million to 60 000 within a time of forty years is hardly thinkable.

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Since the time the people live under the peace of Anglo-Egyptian rule, they

[1] This is the number of the White Nile and Sobat Shilluks only; if all the Shilluk speaking people are included, the population will amount to several hundreds of thousands.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

that under which the deceased held them. For example if a man dies leaving four sons, two married and two unmarried, the two unmarried sons will join the *gol* of their eldest married brother, who thereupon becomes to them *in loco parentis* and their *gol* leader. With this addition to his *gol* the eldest married brother will take also the cattle which used to belong to the deceased, his father, but he will hold them "on trust" for the marriage of these two brothers. 424 582

THE MARRIAGE TIE.

Marriage marks the assumption of personal responsibility, signified outwardly by the acquisition of a homestead. A man wishes to marry as many wives as he can because, although a man with one wife is a full member of society, he who has three or four (more being unusual outside the *Kwar Rok*), is a man of substance and power. This is because his *gol* will become large and powerful and in a position to dominate in its locality. Where an appeal to the spear is an ever present possibility there is definite strength in numbers. There is no place in society for bachelors or spinsters of mature age, and in fact with the exception of *Rok's* daughters and the mentally deficient they hardly exist. Women outnumber men, so that polygyny is reasonable and almost necessary. 581 [516] [589] [162]

The marriage tie creates an obligation to pay cattle, but it is not created by or dependent upon such payment. To render a union a marriage only two things are essential. First there must be no positive barrier, (such as known consanguinity between the parties, whether through male or female lines of descent) and secondly there must be an offer and an acceptance. The offer and acceptance are symbolised by the man offering to the women's *gol* a sheep (*dyal dhok*). Acceptance of this sheep signifies acceptance of the suitor. The marriage is then complete. There follows the beer brewing (*tieng mogko*) and a wedding dance which is held in the woman's village and which serves the important purpose of fixing the marriage in the minds of the public. The completion of the cattle payments (*kany*) may be delayed over a period of years, and until they are complete the woman usually continues to live in her own homestead where her husband may visit 585 [582] [583] 182 583 591